



Attorney General Jon Bruning

NEWS RELEASE

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Jury Convicts Otoe County Man in Murder Case

Note: A sound bite on this topic will be available shortly at: www.ago.ne.gov

(Lincoln, Neb) Attorney General Jon Bruning today announced that Ronald G. Smith, 44, of Syracuse was convicted of Second-degree murder, Second-degree forgery and Theft in Otoe County District Court.

“Mr. Smith killed his girlfriend, and he belongs in prison,” said Bruning. “Today’s guilty verdict ensures justice is being served.”

Terri Harris, 51, was found dead on December 25, 2008 in her Syracuse home. The evidence showed that Smith confessed to pushing her to the ground in her bedroom and placing a pillow over her head.

Law enforcement later found Smith in Illinois after he had forged checks in Harris’ name at a Syracuse bank. He had stolen Harris’ car and cell phone. When police arrived, he barricaded himself inside a motel room.

Otoe County Attorney David Partsch said, “We appreciate law enforcement’s efforts in the investigation and prosecution of Mr. Smith and we thank the jury for their careful consideration of these matters.”

Smith’s sentencing will be October 19, 2009 at 9:30 a.m. in the Otoe County District Court. Second-degree murder is a class IB felony which is punishable by 20 years to life in prison. Second-degree forgery and Theft are each class III felonies which carry a penalty of one to 20 years in prison and/or a \$25,000 fine.

Assistant Attorney General Corey O’Brien and Otoe County Attorney David Partsch handled the case.

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